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Literature used as collateral reading can add "sparkle and bounce" to a course in economics without harming the basic principles of the science. The novel, since it is "both lyric outcry and historical fact," is the most suitable vehicle for this endeavor, but poetry and drama may also be included. Many examples of works of literature can be found to illustrate economics units on "Labor and Management," on "Mining and Manufacturing," and on "Business and Finance." Selections could include a range of works from Dos Passos' "Adventures of a Young Man" and Orwell's "The Road to Wigan Pier" to Miller's "Death of a Salesman." This imaginative writing can help "dramatize, integrate, and enrich" economics courses as the student experiences economic forces through the eyes of the writer. Furthermore, an understanding of the economic powers depicted in a work of literature can deepen the student's appreciation of this literature. (LH)

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Imaginative Literature: Economics-Tonic

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by Donn McCafferty

THIS IS NOT ANOTHER outline of *what* economics should be taught, not a paper of teacher-manual hints, nor a large colorful fold-out scope and sequence chart. It is an attempt to put a generous portion of sparkle and bounce into economics collateral reading without doing violence to the basic principles of the science.

Early last fall, in a period of one week, I had the following experiences: The first was reading a report written by John F. Soboslay, Coordinator of the Pittsburgh Model School Project in Economics, where he reported 8th graders in the Pittsburgh schools reading passages from F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and excerpts from John Steinbeck's unforgettable tale of wandering Oakies in *The Grapes of Wrath*. The second experience occurred while visiting a first grade class. They were reading fairy tales (wishing-tales that were zany and rollicking) to illustrate economic conflict between unlimited wants and limited resources (e.g. *The Fisherman and His Wife* and *The Three Wishes*). The third experience of that week was reading from a report by Priscilla A. Bradley, a junior high teacher from Connecticut, who posed a question from one of her students. "I wonder what advice an American businessman of 1900 could give to a modern Nigerian if he could come back and do so?" All of these three experiences occurring so close together got me thinking about the role that imaginative literature could play in the social studies classroom.

Economics in our schools is like something you have to take, like punishment or nasty medicine. Often the course is taught by a person with a maniacal cackle and a whiff of the diabolical. As a person who has sat through many a "shape up or ship out" type of economics course, taught by a prototype Thomas Gradgrind teaching from a "classic text," I dedicate this brief paper to the supportive role that imaginative literature can play in the economics class.

The teaching of economic principles through literature opens up vast possibilities—possibilities so vast, in fact, that they cannot be given sufficient attention in so brief a work as this. We will limit ourselves to the following periods: the Civil War era in America, the Victorian age in England, and the period from 1870 forward in Europe. Within this span, we will treat class struggles, industrial revolutions, and economic, political and social inequities—the basis of countless socio-economic novels, plays, essays and poems.

Although other forms will work, the novel is perhaps the most suitable vehicle for this endeavor, for it is both lyric outcry and historical "fact." It can be judged from within and without. Lionel Trilling puts it this way: "The novel . . . is a perpetual quest for reality, the field of its research being always the social world, the materials of its analysis being always *manners* as the indication of the direction of man's soul." By manners, Trilling means more than *custom* or *tradition* or *mores*, although these are part of it. Rather, he describes *manners* as "a culture's hum and buzz of implication."

The novel—by reasons of its intention, materials, and form—is a *social study*. The novel gives us history, sociology, government, economics and psychology in artistic synthesis. Unfragmented by the arbitrary jigsaw of curriculum planning, the novel presents a world which is more nearly like the world that students must experience.

History is the record of men and their events in time. It fills the void of the past. It tells us what happened, where, when, and to whom. While history (economics) may move us, it is more likely apt to inform us. On the basis of

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historical experience (and actual study of history itself is only a small part of such experience) we form a world view which helps us to set the pattern of our lives and the characteristic gesture of our generation. We come to agree with Jean-Paul Sartre that "history makes men insofar as men make history." We happen to it as it happens to us in a relationship which is both inevitable and exciting.

Can one discuss the literature of the age of Queen Victoria without understanding the growth of empire, the rapid spread of industrialization with its attendant benefits and evils, and the various socio-economic reforms begun in that era? To understand a literature, one must also understand why and how it evolved. Economics, social studies and English teachers are the logical ones to teach this literature.

Let me give several examples of how this might be done. For purpose of illustration, the topics of *labor and management*, *mining and manufacture*, and *business and finance*, will be used.

LABOR AND MANAGEMENT

To begin a unit on labor and management I would suggest Robert Frost's poem, "Death of the Hired Hand" and follow it with these several selections of imaginative literature.

If we are trying to follow a chronological order, we could begin by reading that humorous socialistic experiment in agriculture, *The Blithedale Romance* by Nathaniel Hawthorne. A possible alternative would be Oliver Goldsmith's *Deserted Village* (in *Vicar of Wakefield and Other Writings).*

The best account I know of the late nineteenth and the twentieth century up to World War I, by one of its most honest and liveliest minds, is H. G. Wells' *Experiment in Autobiography*. Here we have industrial England and Europe in a strongly written account.

Howard Fast's *The American* deals with late 19th century America, the Pullman Strike and railroad unions. A huge cast of characters includes President McKinley, Mark Hanna, Clarence Darrow and, in particular, Judge Altgeld.

The problems of depression America are best portrayed by the following: (1) John Dos Passos' *Adventures of a Young Man* and *Midcentury* (Part III, "Systems of Enterprise"); (2) Carl Jonas' *Jefferson Sellack*, the success story of a small mid-western manufacturer of auto horns; and (3) John Steinbeck's *In Dubious Battle*—a dramatically intense novel of a violent revolt of the fruit pickers in California during the early years of the great depression, written just before (1936) *The Grapes of Wrath*.

To inject a bit of humor at this point seems a good idea, so we would suggest Richard Bissell's *7½ Cents*. The witty Broadway musical *The Pajama Game* was based on this novel of a pajama factory union.

It is always difficult to obtain an outstanding work on trade unionism and labor in contemporary America. Alfred Kern's *Made in U.S.A.* is a widely hailed novel that is just that.

Two examples of powerful writing are Burt Blechman's *The Octopus Papers* dealing with New York's publishing business and America's cultural establishment. His second work, *How Much?* is a novel about the mania for unlimited buying so biting and acrid that if it were not as farcical as it is merciless, it would be unbearable. Young people will really enjoy this book. (Given brilliant reviews in 1961, it is virtually ignored today.)

Mordecai Richler's *Stick Your Neck Out* presents a fine study of magazine hucksterism, hard-sell religion, and sociology as sport.

MINING AND MANUFACTURING

Elizabeth B. Browning's intensely imaginative poem "Cries of the Children" is a haunting and

disturbing look at 19th century England's use of children in factory labor gangs. William Blake's "Songs of Experience" or "Jerusalem" (*The Portable Blake*, Ed. by Alfred Kazin) would be a possible alternative.

An American version of the same problem can be found in the wholly absorbing "They'll Vote Us Out of Town" from *Vermont Tradition* by Dorothy Canfield Fisher.

You can almost hear the creaking of the mine machinery in Ben Ames Williams' *Owen Glen*. Here is a first-rate study of how a coal miners' union grew in America. Students will find this study absorbing.

The single best account of mining I know of, is to be found in *The Orwell Reader* (edited by R. H. Rovere). Here, in a chapter entitled "The Road to Wigan Pier," we have a brilliant evocation of the English coal industry in the 1930's and a hint at what was troubling all of Europe's labor force in those pre-war years. The author successfully shows how early life in the mine villages was lived locally, narrowly and immediately.

Most people agree that a good novel creates a world of its own. So, too, does the outstanding film. The movie, *How Green Was My Valley*, based on Richard Llewellyn's novel of the same name, is a fine film to evoke the Welsh coal mines at the turn of the century.

BUSINESS AND FINANCE

Ogden Nash's amusing "Bankers Are Just Like Everybody Else Except Richer" is a light way to begin a difficult area of study.

Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi* comments on what the steam engine did to passenger and freight traffic on our greatest river system. Instructive comparisons can be made between the plight of inland water transportation in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the plight of the railroad today. The growth of trucking and air transport have made the economic position of many railroads precarious.

Morton Thompson has written an excellent study of the impact of the automobile on harness makers and harness shops as well as of

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ECONOMICS-TONIC

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the wild buying previous to the stock market crash and the results. *Not as a Stranger* has much to tell us in this age of automation and obsolescence.

Paul Corey has a story for junior high readers dealing with how dairy farmers fight to maintain their business independence and their right to work in *Milk Flood*.

Joseph Mersand, a New York English department chairman, has edited three remarkable American plays: Elmer E. Rice's *The Adding Machine*, George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly's *Beggar on Horseback*, and Arthur Miller's *All My Sons*. They appear in *Three Plays About Business in America*. Each is strongly written; each takes as its theme some aspect of the business world and its impact on the human spirit.

In Miller's *Death of a Salesman* we are treated to a study of false values in almost every part of mid-century America's business community. We would recommend using either the play, or the movie version, or the recent powerful TV production.

We should call attention to the fine work of Sholem Asch and his many stories of sweat shop labor, dangerous working conditions, and trade unions pre-occupied with meeting threats to wages and occupational structures. His *East River* would be perhaps the best for school use.

We will close this section with a series of novels published since World War II that concern themselves with New York's Madison Avenue, New York brokerage firms, New York's wealthy world, New York's magazine empires, New York radio and TV, scheming stock pirates, —the whole of fun city: John Marquand's *Second Happiest Day*, Frederick Wakeman's *The Hucksters*, Herman Wouk's *Aurora Dawn*, Sloan Wilson's *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit*, and Theodore H. White's *The View from the 40th Floor*.

While not a work of fiction, Vance Packard's *The Hidden Persuaders*, tells the student of the mis-uses of sociological and psychological research to tantalize, even hypnotize the American consumer and voter.

I would close this unit using parts from two novels published some years ago by Rudyard Kipling. In these works, we find our world in

the year 2036 developed to a highly technological and semi-fascist world state. Fine and chilling. The first book is *Actions and Reactions* (read the part called "With the Night Mail"). The second work is *A Diversity of Creatures* (read the part called "As Easy As A.B.C.").

I like to use imaginative literature to tease, to tickle, and to touch my pupils. I like the double zest that comes with the discovery of text materials enriched by collateral readings. Gifted authors are able to look at specific economic institutions with infinite perception.

We may, through the writer's eyes, experience the coming of Acme Food Stores to Outer Mongolia, or study the collapse of a drugstore chain in Upper Montclair. The enterprising teacher of social studies will hopefully try these few examples in his class. Remember that these materials can help dramatize, integrate, and enrich what Paul Samuelson calls "the oldest of the arts, the newest of the sciences"—economics.